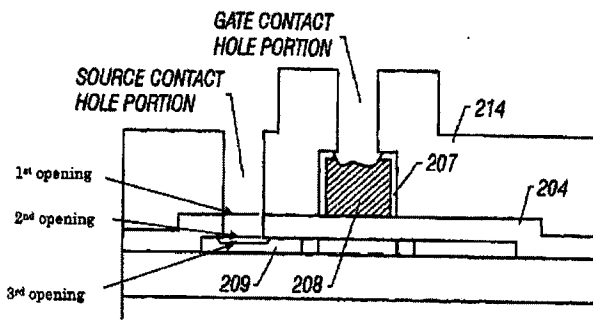


REMARKS

Claims 20, 28-31, 33-38, 40-45, 47-53, 55 and 56 are pending in this application, with claims 20, 34, 41 and 49 being independent. Claims 20, 34, 41 and 49 have been amended. In particular, claims 20 and 34 have each been amended to recite that the third opening defines an area that is greater than an area defined by the second opening such that a portion of the gate insulating film extends “directly” over a portion of the recess; claim 41 has been amended to recite that a part of the first layer and a part of the second layer are located “directly” over the interlayer insulating film; and claim 49 has been amended to recite that a part of the first layer, a part of the second layer, a part of the third layer, and a part of the fourth layer are located “directly” over the interlayer insulating film. Support for the claim amendments may be found in the application specification at least at Figs. 3A and 3C. No new matter has been introduced.

The Examiner has rejected independent claims 20 and 34, and their dependent claims 28-31, 33, 35-38 and 40, as being indefinite. In particular the Examiner asserts that the claimed limitations of a “third opening defining an area that is greater than an area defined by the second opening” and a “sixth opening defining an area that is greater than an area defined by the fifth opening,” as recited in claims 20 and 34, respectively, are “unclear as to how an opening (one dimensional element) can define an area (two dimensional element).” Applicants disagree, and assert that the scope of these limitations is clear.

Specifically, applicants submit that an “opening”, particularly when recited as being “located at a ... surface,” as recited in claims 20 and 34, would necessarily be understood by a person of ordinary skill in the art to be a two dimensional element, not a one dimensional element as asserted by the Examiner. Accordingly, the scope of the claims is clear because an opening, being a two dimensional element, has an area. To illustrate, applicants refer the Examiner to a marked up version of Fig. 3A of the application (below), which shows a particular implementation of the recited openings of claims 20 and 34:



As shown in the exemplary cross-section above, the gate insulating film 204 defines a source contact hole portion (a three dimensional element) extending from a first opening (a two dimensional element) located at a top surface of the gate insulating film 204 to a second opening (a two dimensional element) located at a bottom surface of the gate insulating film 204. Notably, the extension from the first opening to the second opening imparts to the contact hole its necessary third dimension of depth. The semiconductor layer 209 defines a recess (a three dimensional element) having a third opening (a two dimensional element) located at a top surface of the semiconductor layer 209 that defines an area that is greater than an area defined by the second opening such that a portion of the gate insulating film 204 extends directly over a portion of the recess.

For at least these reasons, applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 20 and 34, and their dependent claims, as being indefinite.

Independent claims 20, 34, 41 and 49, and their dependent claims 28, 31, 35, 38, 42, 45, 47, 50, 53 and 55, have been rejected as being anticipated by Kudoh (U.S. Patent No. 5,159,416).

Each of claims 20 and 34, as amended, recites "a gate insulating film on and in contact with the semiconductor layer, the gate insulating film defining a first contact hole extending from a first opening located at a top surface of the gate insulating film to a second opening located at a bottom surface of the gate insulating film, and the semiconductor layer defining a [first] recess having a third opening located at a top surface of the semiconductor layer that is in communication with the second opening, the third opening defining an area that is greater than an area defined by the second opening such that a portion of the gate insulating film extends

directly over a portion of the [first] recess.” Applicants submit that Kudoh does not describe or suggest the above features and, therefore, applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 20 and 34, and their dependent claims.

Kudoh describes a TFT structure having a shottky barrier that includes a silicon film 12, which the Examiner equates to the recited semiconductor layer, on which is formed a titanium silicide film 15 and a gate insulating film 13, which the Examiner equates to the recited gate insulating film. The Examiner equates the area where the titanium silicide film 15 is located to the recited recess. Notably, however, the area where the titanium silicide film 15 is located is not a recess having a third opening located at a top surface of the silicon film 12 that is in communication with a second opening located at a bottom surface of the gate insulating film 13, the third opening defining an area that is greater than an area defined by the second opening such that a portion of the gate insulating film 13 extends directly over a portion of the recess, as claimed. Rather, as shown in Fig. 9, no portion of gate insulating film 13 extends directly over the area where the titanium silicide film 15 is located.

For at least this reason, applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 20 and 34, and their dependent claims.

Each of claims 41 and 49, as amended, recites a source electrode that contains a first layer and a second layer, wherein a part of each of the first and second layers is located directly over an interlayer insulating film. No portion of the titanium silicide film 15, which the Examiner also equates to the recited first layer, is located directly over borophosphosilicate glass layer 98, which the Examiner equates to the recited interlayer insulating film. Rather, as shown in Fig. 9, titanium silicide film 15 is only located directly over silicon film 12. For at least this reason, applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 41 and 49, and their dependent claims.

Dependent claims 29, 36, 43 and 51, have been rejected as being unpatentable over Kudoh in view of Aratani (U.S. Patent No. 5,854,139); dependent claims 33, 40, 48, and 56 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Kudoh in view of Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (AAPA); and dependent claims 30, 37, 44 and 52 have been rejected as being unpatentable over

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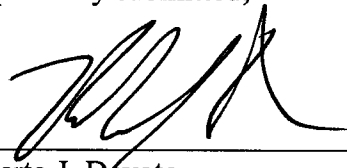
Attorney's Docket No.: 07977-
0107002 / US3194/3205/3215D1

Kudoh in view of Tanaka (U.S. Patent No. 5,798,744). Aratani, AAPA, and Tanaka, alone or in combination, do not remedy the failure of Kudoh to describe or suggest the features discussed above with respect to the independent claims, and, therefore, applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 29, 30, 33, 36, 37, 40, 43, 44, 48, 51, 52 and 56.

Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance.

Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: August 27, 2008

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